

Tylenol-induced liver failure presents own set of problems: study

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Poorer mental, physical health reported by overdose survivors compared to other liver failure patients.

(HealthDay)—People with liver failure caused by an overdose of acetaminophen (Tylenol) have poorer health than patients whose liver failure was caused by other problems, a new study finds.

They reported more days of poor mental and physical health, activity limitations because of poor health, pain, [anxiety and depression](#) than other liver failure patients, U.S. researchers found.

Acetaminophen-overdose patients also had higher rates of substance abuse and [psychiatric disease](#) than other liver failure patients, the study found. And patients who suffered an accidental acetaminophen overdose were less likely to have psychiatric disorders than those who

intentionally overdosed, 48 percent versus 82 percent.

For the study, published online in the journal *Liver Transplantation*, the researchers analyzed data from more than 280 patients who were diagnosed with [acute liver failure](#) between January 1998 and July 2010 and followed them for two years.

Viewed together, both groups of survivors reported more days of "fair/poor" health and more days with physical or mental health impairment than adults in the general U.S. population, the researchers found.

"Our findings indicate that adult survivors of ALF [acute liver failure] have reduced quality of life compared to those of similar age and gender in the general population," concluded Dr. Robert Fontana from the University of Michigan Medical Center.

"Additional investigations of [brain function](#) by our team are under way to further understanding of the type and severity of [cognitive impairment](#) reported by ALF survivors," he added.

Research shows that up to 3,000 people develop acute liver failure in the United States each year, and that while two-thirds of these patients will survive, nearly 30 percent of these patients require emergency [liver transplantation](#).

The long-term consequences of acute liver failure and the health-related quality of life of survivors have been unclear, but this study provides new insight into the issue.

While the results show an association between acetaminophen overdose and worse quality of life among liver-failure patients, they do not establish a

cause-and-effect relationship.

More information

The American Liver Foundation outlines [25 ways to love your liver](#).

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